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## 01. Happy he who, like Ulysses

### Sonnet XXXI

**Heureux qui, comme Ulysse**, a fait un  
beau voyage,  
Ou comme cestuy là qui conquiert la toison,  
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et  
raison,  
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son  
aage!

Quand revoiray-je, hélas, de mon petit  
village  
Fumer la cheminée: et en quelle saison  
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,  
Qui m'est une province, et beaucoup  
d'avantage?

Plus me plaist le séjour qu'ont basti mes  
ayeux,  
Que des palais Romains le front  
audacieux:  
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise  
fine,

Plus mon Loyre Gaulois, que le Tybre  
Latin,  
Plus mon petit Lyré, que le mont Palatin,  
Et plus que l'air marin la douceur  
Angevine.

**Happy he who, like Ulysses**, has completed a  
great journey,  
Or like he who has gained the Golden Fleece,  
And then returned, well versed in knowledge,  
To his family, there to spend his remaining days  
in peace!

When shall I see from the chimney of my hamlet

Once more the rising smoke? And in what  
season  
Shall I see again my poor dwelling's little plot,  
That is to me an entire province - even more than  
that?

I feel more pleasure in my ancestors' works than  
In Roman palaces, so audacious in their pride!  
More than marble I love the fine slate,

Our Gallic Loire than Latin Tiber,  
My modest Lyré than the Mount Palatine,  
And more the Angevine mellowness than the  
marine air.

Joachim du Bellay (1558) *Les regrets et autres œuvres poétiques*, Paris: impr. de F. Morel.

Updated on Apr 22, 2012 by [ArtHS Editor](#) (Version 3)

## 02. Works of art and art criticisms

### Works of art and art criticisms, by Max Simon Nordau [1]

DURING the last years the relation of public opinion to works of art has been repeatedly discussed, and on each occasion with great warmth.

The discussion, in the main, is concerned with two questions which are independent even if they are connected with each other, viz.: Has the public a right to judge a work of art, or must it renounce its own opinion and simply bow before the verdict of specialists? Have not all, or, at any rate, many, works of art that have subsequently gained undisputed recognition by the world, been strongly opposed and rashly rejected on their first appearance in public?

In 1899 intellectual Berlin was excited about a pertinent question. Professor Franz Stuck, the Munich painter, had obtained a commission for a wall-painting for the German House of Parliament. When the artist sent in his sketch, there came a shriek of most unpleasant astonishment from the judging committee of the Reichstag, and a member, Dr Lieber, expressed in public session, in very strong language, his absolutely unmixed feelings in respect of the work.

The Munich friends of the insulted artist, to their credit, made common cause for him. They published an armour-clad protest, in which they characterized the members as "laymen unable to judge," and reproached them with impertinence because they "thought they understood everything better than learned specialists did."

I expressed my views then in the *Deutsche Revue* of this opposition between specialists and laymen in plastic art, and I ask permission to repeat here in brief the essential part of my arguments.

Who are the experts? From the general drift of the objection on the part of the Munich artists it was to be concluded that they must be the practising artists, the critics, perhaps also the professors of art-history. Let him who does not belong to these three sacrosanct categories steal weeping away from the confederation of experts. And even among the critics there is probably a selection to be made. The critic who praises the artist is to him undoubtedly an expert; the critic who blames him shows himself incontestably as a *bourgeois* and in intelligence stands almost as low as a common University professor who does not teach art-history.

All this is foolish talk. In matters of art, if, indeed, anyone can, only an individual – never a category – can lay claim to the rank of expert. Is, perhaps, the practising artist the expert? He is not so necessarily. There are people whose vocation in life, or, speaking more correctly, whose usual occupation, is painting, but whose painting is a continuous insult to art. One may be a professional painter, and yet a pitiful dauber and commit such impudent sins against good taste that every non-expert must recognise this at the first glance and be provoked at it. Or is the critic the expert? It would be a good joke to assert that.

Nearly every verdict on a work or an artist committed to paper by a professional critic is opposed by another verdict, also by a professional critic which says the exact contrary. Which of the two critics is an expert? Which of the two has a right to demand that people should bow before his verdict, because he habitually makes phrases about works of art in

public? What proof of capacity do the papers as a rule demand of the *beaux esprits* to whom they entrust art criticism? He who has observed dozens of times how ambitious young newspaper - writers, on their first report of an opening of an Exhibition, or after forming a coffee-house acquaintance with an artist thirsting for advertisement, suddenly discover in their minds a gift for art criticism, and have subsequently cultivated this with brazen self-consciousness; he will feel highly amused when people try to crack up art-critics as experts, simply because they exercise this function. Even professors of the history of art, even directors of museums, are not, by reason of their office, experts in the sense of possessing very profound understanding of art. The academic study of art-history lays the chief stress on the facts belonging to the history of life and morals, which need have nothing in common with the understanding of art. One may make in archives the most beautiful discoveries for the biography of Leonardo, and not feel a single one of his pictures. And as regards superintendents of museums, it is possible to relate the funniest anecdotes about their fallibility, and oppose to them simple connoisseurs, also “non-experts,” who have formed splendid private collections.

The truth is there are no experts in questions of art, as there are, perhaps, in questions of technique. Expert knowledge presupposes the existence of fixed rules, of a canon. There can be no talk of this in the fine arts. The only element of painting that, at least to a certain point to the point where the individual conception and, with it, really artistic interest first begins is under objective rules, is drawing, both from its figure as well as its perspective side. This element can be taught, learnt, and faithfully measured, for nature furnishes the scales. On the other hand, the colour element in painting is subject to absolutely no canon, but at best to subjective feeling, at worst to a fashion of the period. Every artificial colour is a convention; for, as I have argued more particularly in my studies of Sisley and Pissarro, none can truly reproduce the real colours of natural phenomena, and it is wholly a consequence of education and habit, when the polychrome of oil-painting or water-colour more easily excites in us the illusion of colouristic truth than the monochrome of the two-colour or of black and white art. One decade paints in dark, another in bright colours. One school likes powerful, another subdued harmonies of colour. Præ-Raphaelites imitate the tone of old frescoes and faded Gobelins. Puvis de Chavannes took the colour out of his pictures by a transparent white-wash, pale as the moon. Besnard, on the contrary, discharges fireworks, without caring in the least if the mad tumults of colour that he loved are possible or not in nature. Carrière envelops his figures in a dense mist. Cottet has, very recently, brought into fashion the black and dark shadings which go right back from Ribot and Prudhon to Velasquez and Ribera. Who is right? Who is wrong? Here everything is feeling, and consequently subjectivity. Of drawing, one can in all cases say (and by photography irrefutably prove), it is correct, or it is wrong. Colour does not admit of a similar verdict. All that can be said of it is: “I like it,” or “I don’t like it.”

For beauty in art, in the present condition of the perception theory, the physiology and psychology of pleasurable feelings, there is no other standard than subjective feeling. This is dependent on the greater or the less sensitiveness of the nervous system, on its perceptivity of slight qualitative and quantitative differences in the excitation of the senses, and, therefore, on an essentially congenital constitution of the organism. The gift of receiving strong impressions from works of art can be developed by practice, by the frequent and attentive study of works of art of different kinds; but it cannot be attained artificially by any effort or any amount of study.

What, then, mean the expressions *expert* and *layman*, when applied to aesthetic verdicts? The classes of society, in which preponderating occupation with intellectual problems, continued through several generations, has refined the nervous system and rendered it more sensitive, produce, as a rule, individuals with a feeling for art. These live in large towns, in the centres of art life, they travel, and visit numerous collections, and thus their feeling for

art is developed into a wide understanding of it, that studies works of art from the historical standpoint. These are the real experts, so far as there can be any talk of such in aesthetic questions. But these classes of society, these individuals are only to the very smallest extent painters or professional critics, i.e., critics writing for the public. To wish to exclude them, on that account, from the expert class is ludicrous presumption of certain persons who, by their own authority, confer this title on themselves. The educated public the intellectual elite has not the least reason for allowing their opinion on works of art to be dictated to them by painters who may well be daubers or crack-brained fools, or by critics who may be ignorant phrasemongers.

So much for the first question as to the fitness of the so-called layman for criticising works of art. The second question, as to the changes in public opinion about certain works and their authors, is considerably more complex.

It is not to be gainsaid that such changes have occurred, but they are much rarer than those would like to make us believe who, from instances of pretended later conversions of originally rebellious taste on the part of contemporaries, hope to succeed in proving that the ugly is beautiful and the beautiful is ugly.

The names which were most often cited to prove the incompetency of contemporary judgment on works of art of modern tendency are most unfortunately chosen. Millet, Rousseau, and Corot were looked upon by their contemporaries as smearers and daubers; Manet was laughed to scorn, Böcklin pronounced a fool, his friends advised Hans Thoma to change his name, etc., etc. In order not to go to too great length I will now leave Thoma and Böcklin out of the discussion. But the others! That Rousseau and, especially, Corot passed for smearers and daubers among their contemporaries is simply not true; on the contrary, justice was at once done to them for their technique. Even their most unscrupulous opponents admitted that they were draughtsmen and colourists. What they were reproached with was only the alleged intellectual insignificance of their work. People remained under the influence of classical landscape with ancient buildings or ruins, and a decoration of ideal figures such as Poussin brought into fashion, and Claude Lorrain cultivated. A landscape without nymphs or shepherds in Arcadian dress, without temples or figures of Hermes, seemed empty, insignificant, ignoble. The majority had as yet no taste for the witchery of mood in wood and field. Why, Corot himself was not clear about what was new and determinative in his own art, for in some of his grandest pictures Dryads dance, beneath young-leaved trees immersed in the mists of springtide, the most correct sham-classic square dance. It was only in his last period that he renounced this ancient magic. Rousseau had broken away from tradition more resolutely, and was on that account less esteemed than Corot by contemporaries whose education had been perverted by precedent. But the worst that was said against the two did not go beyond the assertion that they were "vulgar."

The case of Manet is, of course, different. People have roughly disowned this painter; but it is absolutely false to talk about a change in popular opinion about him. Those who "laughed at" him thirty-five years ago, laugh at him in precisely the same way now. In my study of the Caillebotte room in the Luxembourg Museum I have alluded to the angry protest of Gérôme and Gustave Moreau against admitting the works of Manet and his friends into a State collection. If the laughs are not so numerous, and if their laughter is not so ringing as in the "Olympia" year, it is simply because the man is absolutely done with. Only a few stragglers still talk nonsense about Manet, men who have missed the connection of "the last train," and some greybeards in their dotage the barricade warriors of the "Salon" who fancy they are still breathing the gunpowder smoke of 1863, and will keep up to the day of their death, which cannot be far off, the happy, exultant mood of the beer-evenings at the Café de Madrid. None among the pillars of young and living art recognises Manet as his ancestor. People know now that he was a discovery of Zola's. The sharp turn in the development of

art in the last thirty years of the last century was inaugurated, not by him, but by others. Courbet introduced realism which has nowadays shrunk to nothing. Monet kindled "Free Light," and that was a very great service which, unfortunately, is also no longer fully acknowledged, for the latest race of Parisian painters again abandons joyful brightness and goes back to the gloomy, oppressive tones of "the 'fifties." Manet, however, found nothing and invented nothing, and he owes the noise that was, for a period, heard about him only to his relations with a devoted friend, who vindicated his own tendency by that of the painter, and said of him all the good which he thought of himself.

The change in taste from one generation to another is a general law which I proved in the *Neue Freie Presse* of 9<sup>th</sup> August 1896, and afterwards developed and established in the Florence *Rivista Moderna* (No. 3, of 1898, "Le alternanze del gusto"). I strongly believe in the prevalence of this law; but if particular cases are followed in detail, it is recognised that many an apparent change in the appreciation of a work or an artist rests on an illusion of the senses.

To return to the subject of Manet. An awful din arose at the first appearance of "Olympia." Friends and foes waged wild battle with each other. Each panted for the blood of the other. Twenty years later the picture that had been so hotly contested was hung in the State Museum, which roused fresh, but considerably weaker, opposition. Finally, however, no one any longer protested against its presence in the picture-gallery, and now a sophist might assert: "There, you see! The picture which was once laughed at is, thirty years afterwards, acknowledged as a classical work of art."

Gently! That is by no means proved. The fight has ceased only because it has become objectless. Who nowadays waxes warm against Manet? The man, you know, is dead, not only as a human being, but also as an artist. He no longer troubles any one. He no longer exercises any bad influence. He no longer even poisons popular taste, for it is sufficient to observe the visitors to the Luxembourg, to see that they pass by the "Olympia" with laughter, and shrugging of the shoulders, or else with astonishment and shakes of the head. If a belated corybant raises a shout of "Hail, Manet!" he is merrily allowed to shout. It is superfluous to shout him down, for nobody listens to him. The truth is that the taste for Manet is not in the least changed. People find the "Olympia" every whit as repulsive nowadays as it was thirty years ago; but they no longer say so with a loud voice and with the veins about their temples swollen, because, generally, people no longer stop before its mouldy ugliness.

If you examine very carefully, you will generally find that the various appraisements of particular works in a new generation do not originate from later generations regarding it differently than did contemporaries, but from their generally no longer viewing it with the same eyes. Let us only bear in mind always that the vast majority of mankind have no feeling of their own for artistic beauty. They act as if they had some feeling only because they know that a feeling for art is pronounced to be a mark of higher culture. We cannot rate too highly the part played in art idiocy by sham culture, pose, and self-deception or, shall we say, more indulgently, by auto-suggestion? Honest confession of obtuseness to art is hardly found in any but the two poles of humanity – on the extreme summit and at the lowest antipode. A man must be either a rustic lout or an overtopping genius like Prince Bismarck, to confess that he can make nothing of the fine arts. The culture-Philistine never has this courage. He always pretends that he finds luxurious enjoyment in the contemplation of art. This culture-Philistine always repeats what has been said to him; he admires where the Baedeker-star prescribes admiration. And he is, in many cases, not even dishonest. He persuades himself that he feels what he regards it as his duty as an educated man to feel; and he really comes to feel it in the end, thanks to this self-persuasion. All the effects of art depend on suggestion, so far as they are not concerned with the most absolutely primitive

and undifferentiated sensual excitations. On one who has a genuine feeling for art the work of art itself conveys the suggestion, which is followed by feelings of pleasure. On the average men, whose blunt nerves take no impression from the work of art itself, the Baedeker-star the label – exercises this suggestion. If a work of art has once got the reputation of excellence, either because it deserves it, or because it acquired it from a dishonest, busy, bold, and swaggering clique, the next generation of Philistines in art does not test it further, but takes it as something accepted. The clique can then state triumphantly that the work they have puffed is a success. But has it on that account acquired real success?

The number of free, strong men is extremely small, who have the courage, desire, and ability to examine the veracity of traditional labels; but there is a frightful devastation every time that such an idol-destroyer and overthrower of altars breaks into the Temple of Renown, which is guarded by that dragon, the Good Old Way. People are then convinced about the quantity of plaster rubbish which has been smuggled into proximity with real marble and gold – and – ivory work in the semidarkness of the sanctuary, and has enjoyed for hundreds, perhaps for thousands of years, the same veneration as the wonder - working revelations of genius.

But suppose we conceive in our mind's eye the extremely rare case in which a real masterpiece was misjudged at first, and, later on, was greeted with acclamations. In this case the question, as a rule, is not of lack of understanding, but of lack of sense of proportion. The contemporary age which blames, and the succeeding age which praises, are both right, i.e., they do not praise and blame the same thing, and the divergent appraisement of the work is simply due to the fact that contemporaries like to dwell on the faults and overlook the excellences, whilst latter generations neglect the faults and regard only the excellences. The contemporaries were biased in severity; their successors are biased in indulgence. Ideal justice is not of this world. But faults remain faults even in the ages that come after, and excellences, too, were excellences even in the period of their origin; and it is jugglery and forgery when people interpret the change in appraisement as if a later generation had admired as a merit that which an earlier generation had stigmatised as a fault. Just one example to illustrate these propositions: Millet is said to have passed for “a dauber and smearer.” Now, his contemporaries who blamed him used no such harsh expression. They said only that Millet drew incorrectly and painted carelessly, and those with a real feeling for art notice exactly the same thing to-day, only they say it no longer, unless the question is expressly put to them. On the other hand, his contemporaries, too, noticed his deep moral earnestness, his warm human feeling, the touching simplicity of his style, which we prize so highly in Millet to-day. But they were not inclined to forgive him his defects in execution on account of these intellectual merits, whilst we take his weakness in form into the bargain on account of the feeling it contains. These weaknesses, however, are there to-day precisely as they were thirty years ago, and he who fails to see them is guilty of presumption if he passes a verdict on pictures.

Taking them altogether, the works and artists that were overvalued by contemporaries are far more numerous than those that were underestimated at the beginning. And even in the extremely few cases of the latter category, the injustice of contemporaries did not, as a rule, take the form of violent opposition, but that of indifference. Contemporaries did not gainsay their beauty; but it escaped their attention, because this was claimed by other fashions and styles. No work of plastic art that is nowadays accepted without dispute was rejected, when it appeared, with such anger as certain products of the “Secession” are at the present day.

That is natural. The conditions of art production were half a century ago absolutely different to what they are now. The artist gave his personality full scope, and sought to please only a few customers of rank, without troubling himself about the people at large. To-day he wants to excite a sensation at any price, and he looks, for this end, not into himself, but about

himself. By creating he is not satisfying his impulse to give form and shape, but his hunger for success.

Vain amour propre, swaggering, conceited vanity and cunning “pushfulness” are the motives that far too often guide the artist's brush or chisel. The coarse vulgarity of the means corresponds with the coarse vulgarity of the motives and aims. One must make a sensation, and that is attained most easily by a rowdy rebellion against taste, truth, and healthy human intelligence. If he annoys his contemporaries, the ruthless advertiser finds his account more surely than if he praised them. Only he who startles dares hope to be noticed in our present huge exhibitions with their three thousand numbers. That is why the unscrupulous competitor works with the object of startling, and only with that object. His natural allies are writers who seek by aggressive criticism to satisfy the same hysterical impulse towards sensation as he, and the snobs who hope to justify their claim to be un-Philistine by pretending to discover and appreciate hidden beauties, where the thick-headed majority of their fellow - men observe and condemn only unblushing outrages on the sense of beauty.

The necessity for creating a sensation has arisen only in our times of over-production in all fields of intellectual creation, and of frightfully murderous competition for success. In the earlier days of art it played hardly any part at all. On this account it is fallacious to try to deduce from the, after all, extremely rare romances of works, originally misjudged but afterwards recognised, in the past, an argument in favour of certain creations of the present day, which a large proportion of educated men rejects, not because they do not understand, them, but because they understand them only too well.

Let men only have the quiet courage not to allow themselves to be put out of countenance; they will carry their point even before posterity.

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[1] Max Simon Nordau, “Works of art and art criticisms”, *On Art and Artists*, trans. by W. F. Harvey, M.A. (1907), Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co. Publishers.



### 03. “To spatialize time is a faculty shared by snails and by historians”: George Kubler and Herni Focillon

or Kubler and Focillon in Yale: the course of “times”

by Annamaria Ducci

#### Prologue: “in his hands the history of art was never a narrow discipline”

In the 1930s George Kubler studied at Yale with the French art historian Henri Focillon [1]. Kubler has always recognized the importance of his intellectual training [2], and he was also one of the most lucid followers of Focillon's line of thought, especially during the last phase, when the French scholar focused on the relationship between history and form, a problem that he named *formisme*.

Kubler's critics have always stressed the intellectual link between the French Professor and his American student [3]. In both his forwards to Kubler's collected essays and to the Spanish edition of *La configuración del tiempo*, Thomas Reese compared Kubler's thought with Focillon's works [4], especially *Vie des formes*, dating from 1934 [5]. Reese's studies are full of pertinent observations; consequently, I will limit myself to shed light on some less known aspects of Focillon's intellectual work, which can help to strengthen the dialectical link between the two scholars.

However, a preliminary consideration should be made, regarding the German-speaking world of art history. Kubler's father Frederick William too, had trained in art history in Germany at the beginning of the century, studying with scholars like Ranke and Furtwängler. This fact could perhaps be the very first of George Kubler's links with the European tradition of history and art history. George Kubler himself had studied in Berlin and Munich in the early 1930s. Moreover, he met Walter Friedrich Otto, a specialist of the history of religions, who certainly was among the sources of inspiration for Kubler's reasoning on the collective forms of representation (the “iconography without texts”), and for his morphological-anthropological approach.

Reese's observations are crucial. He underlined how Kubler borrowed from his French teacher two main ideas: “the role of interaction of material and technique in the process of creation” and “the importance of sequence and seriation”, that Focillon had inherited from his father's artistic work,

printmaking [6]. With regard to the prose of the two art historians, the critic notes in Kubler a shift from Focillon's literary form of evocation to an almost scientific, neo-positivist precision. From his French teacher the American scholar undoubtedly inherited the use of metaphor [7], that I believe (with Thomas Reese) he conceived not as an aesthetic element, or as a elusive *escamotage* [8], but as a real hermeneutic tool, making reasoning visible. And this is one of the most seductive aspects in both *Life of forms* and in *The Shape of Time*[9], where the visionary element which had inspired Focillon's writing reaches rare heights of expression.

There was not a strict dependence between the older art historian and his pupil, however I am convinced that in the Yale years there was a dialectical exchange between the two. Perhaps it is useful to understand how, starting from the teachings of Focillon, Kubler felt the need to greatly expand the boundaries of art history: "in his hands the history of art was never a narrow discipline", the student recognized [10]. Thanks also to the fundamental input of other intellectuals (above all Alfred Kroeber) [11], Kubler laid the groundwork for a renewed vision of the discipline, as a model of knowledge and interpretation of the "history of things". As Thomas Reese pertinently wrote: "Kubler's *The Shape of Time* was his response across time to his master's *Vie*, which he criticized, modified, extended, and rebuilt into a much more unified and systematic edifice of thought" [12].

## **1- The Life of Forms**

One of the first links between Focillon and Kubler is in fact the English translation of *The Life of forms in art*, published, as everyone knows, in 1942 [13]. It was not a simple orthodox translation, because George Kubler and Charles Beecher Hogan carried out a real revision of the original French book, together with the help of Focillon himself as they explained in the Foreword: "It could be said with little exaggeration that that he not only wrote the book, but is rather more than half responsible for its English dress". The 1942 edition was almost a different book, in part due to the inserting of illustrations (not directly tied to the text, but simply inspired by certain passages), which sounds to me as if the editors wanted to strengthen the concepts of morphology applied to art as expressed by Focillon; something similar to Malraux's use of images in his *Les Voix du silence* (1951) [14], a book frequently named in *The shape of time*.

This revision of *The Life of forms* reveals one of the major merits of Focillon's masterpiece, which was

a work open to and susceptible to new interpretations, a highly complex and even contradictory text. In *Vie des formes* any critical element seems to coexist with its own opposite; not surprising that the book opens with the following sentence: “Les problèmes posés par l’interprétation de l’œuvre d’art se présentent sous l’aspect de contradictions presque obsédantes” [15]. This sentence is paraphrased many times in *The Shape of time*, in order to explain the main contradiction between the uniqueness of the work of art and its being part of a long, open sequence [16].

The author’s aim was to write a text which was contrary to a fixed system, since the first postulate for a history of art is the *freedom* of forms. And he started directly from works of art, not from a general concept of form. He in fact stated the following: “Dans des recherches nécessairement diverses, poursuivies trente années, et qui me furent autant d’expériences intellectuelles, j’ai été guidé par quelques principes que m’avaient inspirés les artistes eux-mêmes dans la familiarité de leur pensée créatrice. Je n’ai pas commencé par un système” [17]. In this statement a first analogy with Kubler’s intellectual work can be found, because, as Thomas Reese said, “his ideas were the product of empirical induction” [18].

In fact, *Vie des formes* is not a treatise of metaphysics. According to Focillon the form is a concrete, spatial and material entity, a living form, changing continuously in the course of time. At the heart of his dynamic aesthetics – that the author calls *phenomenology* – Focillon places the artist’s work, since man’s skill (his technique) is the engine and the *raison d’être* of any creative process. Actually, Focillon goes back to a positive evaluation of *faire* (the manual act of making a work of art) that was the basis of Diderot’s aesthetics and that will continue throughout the nineteenth century in France [19]. Focillon himself provides us with a brilliant, poetical essay on this subject in his *Eloge de la main*, first published together with *Vie des formes* in 1939 [20]. Kubler too insists on this “praise of hands” in his pages dedicated to the artist as a *homo faber*, echoing Focillon’s book.

For both the authors human history - unlike biology - is made of chance [21] and choices. The concept of “purpose” is central to *The Shape of time*: “every man-made thing arises from a problem as a purposeful solution” [22]. The weight of the intention is what distinguishes a work of art from a simple tool: complexity versus simplicity [23]. Focillon sees a sharp distinction between the will and the realization of a work of art; that is to say between *intention* and *solution*: art cannot be conceived without work, artistic creativity in itself is nothing without the technical-manual aspect. In *Vie des formes* he underlines the following « L’intention de l’œuvre d’art n’est pas l’œuvre d’art (...) Elle est

toujours, non le vœu de l'action, mais l'action» [24]. A critical reference to the Rieglian *Kunst-wollen* is evident here. In its empirical dimension *Vie des formes* aimed to be the provocative answer to the German speaking artistic theories dating from the *fin de siècle*, though no doubt Focillon borrowed more than one concept from the scholars of the *Kunstwissenschaft*, like Fiedler, Wickhoff, Riegl and Schmarsow [25]. The autonomy of the form, the refusal of a linear development in styles, the re-evaluation of the epochs of decay, indicate the crucial path towards a new kind of art history, which Focillon fully adopted; he refused a content-oriented interpretation of history, as well as the homogeneity of cultural aspects in a same epoch (*Zeitgeist*). But he always rejected the abstract and idealistic nature of styles, perceived as cyclical and necessary movements, similar to biological systems.

## 2 - Time

Focillon's elucidation about styles depends on the notions of *space* and *time*, a dyad that will be assumed and discussed by George Kubler himself. In his essays Thomas Reese rightly focused on the dualism proposed by Henri Bergson, that is the irreducibility of time (conceived as a vital *durée*) and space [26]. Bergsonian vitalism, infused with the physical concept of energy, is at the heart of Focillon's phenomenology of form: the forms live, constantly changing and relate to each other by organizing themselves in space and time. Such a vitalism in the first three decades of the Twentieth century was widespread in France, among philosophers, artists and art historians (like Elie Faure, and even the early works of Malraux) [27].

Focillon accepted the vitalism proposed in *L'évolution créatrice* as the premise to his own phenomenology of forms, but he assumed significant points of distinction with Bergson's philosophy. According to Focillon, between space and time (as between matter and spirit) there is not a strong opposition, rather they coexist in a necessary interpenetration. At the very beginning of *The Life of forms* Focillon states that "L'œuvre d'art est mesure de l'espace, elle est forme, et c'est ce qu'il faut d'abord considérer (...) Pour exister, il faut qu'elle se sépare, qu'elle renonce à la pensée, qu'elle entre dans l'étendue, il faut que la forme mesure et qualifie l'espace. C'est dans cette extériorité même que réside son principe interne" [28].

For Focillon time in history can not be pure duration, an indistinct flow; instead, only through visible, spatial forms can we grasp the historical flow: "Nous entrevoyons ainsi une sorte de structure mobile du temps, où interviennent divers ordres de rapports, selon la diversité des mouvements. Elle est analogue en son principe à cette construction de l'espace, de la matière et de l'esprit dont l'étude des formes nous a montré de nombreux exemples et, peut-être quelques règles très générales" [29].

For Kubler time differs from biology, but also from history itself: "Without change there is no history; without regularity there is no time. Time and history are related as rule and variation: time is the regular setting for the vagaries of history" [30]. From this Kubler went on to develop his innovative idea of sequence, considering the nature of artistic time as irreducible *duration*: duration is "a sequence among distinct actions of the same class ... which resist classification" [31]. In fact, time has a "fibrous" structure; human history consists of formal sequences, made up of "fibrous bundles, with each fiber corresponding to a need upon a particular theater of action, and the lengths of the fibers varying as to the duration of each need and the solution of its problems" [32]. This distinction also determines the nature of human creations: replication is linked to regularity, while invention is connected to the irregularity of history.

For Kubler historical time is "intermittent and variable", and at the heart of this intermittence there are the *intervals*. The sequence is "a historical network of gradually altered repetitions of the same trait"; consequently, he says, "in historical time the web of happening that laces throughout the intervals between existences attracts our interest" [33]. For Kubler the "small interval-changes", the "infinitesimal alterations" separating distinct events, are enormously important: in his open sequence-shaped art history, any "minute alteration" is vital to the identity of a single work of art [34]. Summing up, the interval is of particular importance because it offers the best visualization of the fiber-like structure of temporal stages.

In *Vie des formes* Focillon had previously explained how intervals play a fundamental role in historical morphology; only by looking at intervals are we able to define the reciprocal position – the *spatial* position - of the events with respect to one another: "Le rapport de deux faits dans le temps n'est pas le même selon qu'ils sont plus ou moins éloignés l'un de l'autre. Il y a là quelque chose d'analogue aux rapports des objets dans l'espace et sous la lumière, à leur dimension relative, à la projection de leurs ombres. Les repères du temps n'ont pas une pure valeur numérique. Ce ne sont pas les divisions du mètre, qui ponctuent les vides d'un espace indifférent (...) Ce n'est pas tout de savoir que les faits se succèdent, ils se succèdent à de certains intervalles" [35]. According to Focillon, the interval – as it was for the music of his time – has *its own value*, it is like a lens through which one can consider the whole sequence.

Focillon considered that it is risky to paint time and to study history through a biological lens (or, more precisely, through botanic, as Taine did, or through comparative anatomy, as Viollet-le-Duc did, to mention only a few): history risks becoming a question of cyclic regularity, a simple series of

taxonomies, an evolution shifting sometimes towards finalism.

On the contrary Focillon took up the paradigm of *geology*, that he described several times as a movement and superposition of differently inclined strata, sometimes separated by sudden faults, through which the roots of the past are made visible. In the opening pages of *L'An Mil* the geological metaphor as applied to history is laid out: "L'histoire n'est pas le devenir hégélien. Elle n'est pas semblable à un fleuve qui emporterait à la même vitesse et dans la même direction les événements et les débris d'événements. C'est même la diversité et l'inégalité des courants qui constituent proprement ce que nous appelons l'histoire. Il nous faudrait plutôt penser à une superposition de couches géologiques, diversement inclinées, parfois interrompues par des failles brusques, et qui, en un même lieu, en un même moment, nous permettent de saisir plusieurs âges de la terre, si bien que chaque fraction du temps écoulé est à la fois passé, présent et avenir" [36].

The geological image of time is perfectly fitted to Focillon's 'philosophy of history'; thanks to its discrepancy the new vision allows a high degree of freedom in the sequence of events. Focillon shared this metaphor with a large group of French intellectuals all employing the terrestrial morphology as a visual model for their historical representation: from the naturalist Buffon to Jules Michelet, from Anatole France to Paul Valéry [37]. Moreover, geology was frequently referred to by several European intellectuals (like Simmel and Benjamin), who were deeply influenced by Freudian psychoanalysis. The same can be said for art historians like Ruskin, Pater and Warburg; as everybody knows, the latter used in fact the notion of *Leitfossil* and named Burckhardt and Nietzsche as seismographs.

In a 1933 essay entitled *Sur la notion de style* Focillon proposed an impure vision of the stylistic process : "Nous aimons à reconstruire des types d'évolution harmonique, mais, pour avoir une vue complète, il faut tenir compte des déchets" [38]. The *déchets*, the wastes, recall Bergson's evolutive *débris*, and most of all the "vital wastes" ("lebensfähige Reste") described by Jacob Burckhardt in his lessons on the Renaissance which he gave in Zurich in 1855-1856 [39]. From a historical point of view, Focillon's wastes stand for brilliant developments without an evident future in the succession of forms; or, if we prefer, for the blind alleys in Kubler's sequence (the "abandoned, arrested, or 'starved' classes, which have been left unexploited") [40]. The American student was fascinated by such a reading of history. His interest in scientific models (thermodynamics, theory of complexity) is well

known [41]. But it is true that in *The shape of time* Kubler sometimes returns to this geological metaphor, for example when he describes the “things” in terms of “fossil actions”.

### 3 – «La forme du temps»

“*Le passé ne sert qu’à connaître l’actualité. Mais l’actualité m’échappe : Qu’est-ce que c’est donc l’actualité ?* For years this question – the final and capital question of his life – obsessed my teacher Henri Focillon, especially during the black days from 1940 to 1943 when he died in New Haven. The question has been with me ever since, and I am now no closer to the solution of the riddle” [42]. Kubler’s definition of actuality as “the void between events”, that he describes by the well-known, evocative image of the flashing lighthouse, is certainly one of the most powerful pages of the twentieth century history of art. Moreover, this definition presents a clear analogy to the “lecture par les vides”, through which Focillon insists on the informative value of the shadow instead of light, of the void, of the dissolving phase of one style [43].

Thanks to some unknown manuscripts, dating from 1936 to 1940, we know that at the time Focillon was planning a major work entitled *Connaissance du passé* or *La forme du temps*. In these papers Focillon emphasizes the *present* as the most important time tense: actuality is the *lieu* where eternity is encountered and where history breathes: “toute l’histoire est une contemporain perpétuel, une matière perpétuellement contemporaine. Ce qui change, ce qui est inédit, ce sont les formes. L’actualité est forme (...) toute l’histoire est contenue dans tout le présent” [44].

In *Vie des formes* the question had been: “Quelle est la place de la forme dans le temps, et comment s’y comporte-t-elle ? Dans quelle mesure est-elle temps et dans quelle mesure ne l’est-elle pas ?” [45]. Or - following the path indicated by Riegl - can we describe the life of forms *in* time ? In those unpublished papers Focillon’s interest shifts to a new question: can we describe the forms *of* the time and their inner life ? Is it possible to shape time ?

We cannot discuss today all of these papers. It is enough to say that we can find here echoes from Nietzsche’s view of history as a multiplicity of perspectives, and above all from Burckhardt’s Basel lessons *On the study of history*, which were translated into French in 1938. One of Burckhardt’s major innovative elements is that he carried out historical research from an aesthetic point of view, which led him to compare the historian to the painter; a comparison which was taken up by Focillon in his

unpublished papers and – as everybody knows – by Kubler himself [46].

Focillon never completed his book dedicated to a morphology of history and which would have become, I believe, one of the major works of his time. Kubler was close to his teacher in his very last years. In the January of 1940 (“that freezing January of knee-high snows”), Focillon lectured at Yale about “the methods of the history of art within the methods of knowledge”; George Kubler was there, and took up seventeen pages of notes. A second round of lectures (“as the ice roughened the streets...”) was delivered by the French Professor, concerning the problem of “style” and its “phases” [47]. As one can easily see, for Focillon knowledge, history and styles were closely related topics.

In those “black days” at the beginning of the Second World War, the French Professor surely offered his pupil many suggestions, and allowed him to take up the challenge: starting from his teacher’s morphology, Kubler went on to draw up his own version of a shape of time. For Kubler the historian’s commitment should be “the discovery of the manifold shape of time”, and “to portray time” [48]. To be more precise, the historian does not merely describe events, but seeks to identify the deeper structures of time [49]. For both the authors, the work of an art historian is a way of understanding history, from the privileged standpoint of a scientist facing the objects, which are wrecks from the long historical chain of time [50]. Consequently it is clear that for Kubler - like for Focillon – the form functions as a hermeneutical category. As Thomas Reese pointed out, for Kubler, “Art keeps culture moving” [51].

#### **4 - Styles**

In both Focillon and Kubler the question arises, whether we have to succumb to the idea of an ungraspable, indefinable time, or are able to imagine an alternative type of succession for artistic forms, which is not reduced to the narrow limits imposed by the notion of historical style [52]. In *The Shape of Time* George Kubler affirmed that “style describes a specific figure in space better than a type of existence in time” [53]. In his 1967 essay *Style and the Representation of Historical Time* Kubler intended to contrast the definition of style as “constant form” as proposed by Meyer Schapiro in a volume edited by Kubler’s friend and major mentor, Alfred Kroeber [54]. In his paper Kubler stated that:



“To spatialize time is a faculty shared by snails and by historians (...) The idea of style is best adapted to static situation, in crosscut or synchronous section. It is an idea unsuited to duration, which is dynamic, because of the changing nature of every class in duration (...) the idea of style is better suited to extension than to duration” [55].

Since forms live and constantly change in time, the category of style is not appropriate to analyse them in duration; styles themselves metamorphose and vanish, we cannot capture them: “Style is like a rainbow” [56].

Kubler’s idea of style remains unclear and sometimes obscure. In his view style could not be used as a lens to read art history in its diachronic duration; but he did not totally discard its applicability, since he limited its use to a “synchronic” view [57]. In his later essay *Towards a Reductive Theory of Visual Style* [58] Kubler took up this argument again, and insisted in attacking Schapiro’s view of style as a “mode of expression”, mainly social. However, Kubler tried to conceive a more ‘spatial’ notion of style, starting by an alternative etymology of style based on the Greek word for column, *stylos* [59] (a brilliant, but rather too inventive interpretation).

Focillon’s phenomenology of forms moves around the two opposite and complementary principles of time and space: on the one hand, the incessant and discontinuous metamorphosis of history, on the other its consolidation in styles. Forms undergo continual metamorphosis, but are held back by the self-organizing principle of styles: «La forme peut devenir formule et canon, c’est-à-dire arrêt brusque, type exemplaire, mais elle est d’abord une vie mobile dans un monde changeant. Les métamorphoses, sans fin, recommencent. C’est le principe des styles qui tend à les coordonner et à les stabiliser» [60].

Focillon accepted - even if critically - an operational concept of style. Let’s keep in mind that he was writing in the 1930s, the years of affirmation of the *Kunstwissenschaft*, which was based on a redefinition of the concept of style itself (bear in mind Riegl’s *Stil-fragen*). Focillon defined *the* style as “la ligne des hauteurs”, as the criterion of excellence which distinguishes the work of art. Besides this traditional definition, he also considered style in a broad way, as an interpretative key to civilization. Style is a “milieu formel homogène, cohérent, à l’intérieur duquel l’homme agit et respire, milieu qui est capable de se déplacer en bloc” [61] ; and : “tous les arts peuvent être conçus sous l’espèce d’un style – et jusqu’à la vie même de l’homme, dans la mesure où la vie individuelle et la vie historique

sont formes" [62]. This anthropological reading probably derived from Viollet-le-Duc and ultimately from the forceful definition of style given by the naturalist Buffon in 1753: "Le style est l'homme même" [63].

In *Vie des formes* styles are built up not only over time but also in matter and visible space; hence their nature is essentially visual, but not static; on the contrary, it is dynamic and even uncertain and precarious. While one style is ending, another is born. For this reason, we can find different styles in the same age; it is also possible that a certain style returns again in different periods. Thanks to art we can see that history "n'est pas une suite bien scandée de tableaux harmonieux, mais, en chacun de ses points, diversité, échange, conflit" [64]; artists, movements, works of art existing in the same historical period, may be in great conflict with each other; the history of art may show survivals, advances or retardations in the same period: "plusieurs styles peuvent vivre simultanément, même dans des régions très rapprochées, même dans une région unique" [65]. This idea was well rooted in French tradition, since it had already been fully expressed at the end of the Nineteenth century by Louis Courajod, the Louvre curator, who was also well acquainted with contemporary Vienna art history: "L'art ne marche pas par des progrès insensibles et continus. L'art s'avance quelquefois assez loin, pour reculer ensuite et revenir à son point de départ primitif, ou à peu près, et enfin le dépasser de nouveau" [66]. So, through his notion of style Focillon grasps the discontinuity of history which is also one of Kubler's major points of interest; as he clearly stated: "Different styles can coexist, like languages in one speaker. Such coexistence itself can be more various than style" [67].

Moreover, according to Focillon the sphere of art does not perfectly match the political, economic or scientific aspects of a given period. The idea of a discrepancy between a historical period and its style was not new; first proposed by Riegl, then taken up by Wölfflin, it was finally formulated by Wilhelm Pinder, in his *Das Problem der Generation in der Kunstgeschichte Europas* (1926), where he stated that "in the same period several generations work" [68]. In *The Shape of Time* Kubler cites Pinder only in a footnote - and very critically (it must be pointed out that the German historian upheld nationalist and racial ideologies in the 1930s) [69], but it is clear that the idea of a discontinuous formal chain came also from this book [70].

Most of all, Focillon wanted to undermine the nineteenth-century notion of historical style, cutting it off from chronology. As a heuristic category, style is rather (like chronology) an indicator of

differences [71]. But how can the historical development be shown? Actually Focillon replaces styles with the new notion of “formal states” (or “phases”). In fact, styles are historical and conventional, formal states are vital and not historical. The concept of formal state - as opposed to style – frees us from a historicist interpretation, opening up to embrace a more universal perspective. The formal state is therefore a new concept which guarantees the freedom of forms, the duration of time: "L'état d'un style ou, si l'on veut, un moment de la vie des formes est à la fois garant et promoteur de la diversité" [72].

In Focillon's mind the forms are alive, but this does not mean that he wholeheartedly adopted the idea of art as a replica of the organic world, with its stages of birth, development and decline. Focillon imagines in fact four states or ages of styles: experimental, classical, of refinement, and baroque. Focillon takes up Vasari's organicistic triad, but alters it by including a fourth moment of refinement. Focillon's major target was Heinrich Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe*, as he later confessed [73]. When compared to Wölfflin's, Focillon's stylistic alternation appears to be much more fluid and unpredictable. In fact, the necessary, bipolar alternative between classical and baroque described by Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* is made more dynamic and freed from mechanistic strictures [74]. Moreover, Focillon as opposed to Wölfflin extends the concept of "state" throughout the whole course of art, including the Middle Ages: every historical style may go through each of the four phases (for example, the Gothic can be classic in the twelfth century, or refined - the *Rayonnant* -, or also baroque - the *Flamboyant*).

But, what about Kubler ? It is clear that the Focillonian formal state is the equivalent of Kubler's "systematic age"; moreover he himself linked his primary distinction between “promorphic” and “neomorphic” to “archaic” and “baroque” formal states [75] (although one could probably find a stronger analogy between Kubler's “neomorphic” and Focillon's “refinement”).

At the heart of this innovative idea is the concept of *relationship*, since a formal state is defined only by confronting a work of art with others of the same period. The concept of relationship is central to both authors. Focillon defined the work of art as follows: “L'œuvre d'art est une tentative vers l'unique, elle s'affirme comme un tout, comme un absolu, et, en même temps, elle appartient à un système de relations complexes” [76]. The primordial essence of forms is to establish relations: “ Les relations formelles dans une œuvre et entre les œuvres constituent un ordre, une métaphore de l'univers » [77]. If the relations between forms constitute an "order", it is – according to Bergson – because in ever-

changing time the elements vary, but their mutual relationships remain constant.

George Kubler underlined this [78], and opened *The Shape of Time* proposing to look at art history as a "system of formal relations" [79]. The scientific model of topology (mentioned by Focillon himself in *The Life of forms*) [80] is defined by Kubler precisely as a measurement "without numbers (...) where relationships rather than magnitudes are the subject of study" [81]. Kubler's concept of sequence included not a harmonic succession of styles, but a *discontinuous* succession of "prime works and replications", bound together by a complex net of *constant* relationships. As he says in *The Shape of Time*, "Sequence classing stresses the internal coherence of events, all while it shows the sporadic, unpredictable, and irregular nature of their occurrence" [82]; or - in an even more explicit definition: "Similar regularities probably govern the formal infrastructure of every art" [83], that means the framework of the objects, and their mutual relationships.

The art historian is the scientist who brings to light the combinations and the laws that govern these relationships, and the historian reveals the intricate web of relationships between events in time. Kubler opened up the concept of relationship from a visual to a general, methodological point of view: the unveiling of relations among events and among disciplines is the key to a "fuller understanding of a greater whole (...) the larger frontiers of knowledge, because only within the larger contours do the individual paths become meaningful" [84].

## **5 - Genealogical method**

For both Focillon and Kubler the work of art is essentially the result of a *problem which has been solved*. Focillon stresses on the *expérience* (a term that Kubler correctly translates by the word *experiment*). The experiment is the propulsive moment in his phenomenology of art. In fact, a work of art is the result of all the past actions of men, and their various attempts and corrections [85]. Thanks to the work of the individual artist a formal chain will be continuously modified, thus insuring a perennial innovation of the life of forms.

By his theory of the work of art as a "signal" Kubler reveals how he was influenced by his teacher's "genealogical method". Focillon compares the art historian to the scientist: their method should be not simply descriptive, but rather active, and based on verification (a parallel taken up by Kubler himself) [86]. According to Focillon, art historians must bear in mind the different phases a work of art is subjected to during the process of its creation. This is precisely the reason why the artists' sketches

are crucial for this genealogy à rebours: the rough sketches, and not the completed work of art can shed light on the process of creativity: “C’est là l’intérêt fondamental (supérieur à l’intérêt proprement historique) que présente l’ ‘histoire’ de l’œuvre avant l’exécution définitive, l’analyse des premières pensées, des esquisses, des croquis antérieurs à la statue ou au tableau. Ces impatientes métamorphoses et les études attentives qui les accompagnent développent l’œuvre sous nos yeux, comme l’exécution du pianiste développe la sonate, et il nous importe beaucoup de les voir encore agir et bouger dans l’œuvre apparemment immobile» [87]. As Kubler himself states: “perhaps the jottings and sketches of architects and artists, put down in the heat of imagining a form, or the manuscript *brouillons* of poets and musicians, crisscrossed with erasures and corrections, are the hazy coast lines of this dark continent of the ‘now’, where the impress of the future is received by the past” [88].

In *Généalogie de l’unique* – an essay several times quoted by Kubler - the French scholar proposed an innovative kind of relationship between “prime objects” and “replicas”, showing the crucial importance of what he precisely called “infinitesimals”: “Il nous faut apprendre à être sensibles aux infinitésimales, non pour exercer un vain raffinement, mais pour atteindre l’essentiel de notre objet (...) Si nous insistons sur cette idée, c’est qu’un certain abus de l’analogie tend à faire disparaître l’individu sous l’espèce et à considérer cette dernière, même quand elle est une pure vue de l’esprit, comme une réalité en soi” [89]. In Focillon’s vision the copy, too, is part of the life of forms, since imitation is always an interpretation, it is a kind of creation: “L’œuvre d’un artiste, vue par un autre, intervient dans une vie nouvelle, qui la traite d’une façon particulière (...) Elle frappe parce qu’elle est unique, mais elle collabore à une autre forme de l’unique, elle la sollicite, elle la favorise. La mémoire de l’artiste n’est pas un dépôt de souvenirs cristallisés, mais un lieu d’agitation et d’expérience” [90]. So, in his ‘genealogy’ Focillon blends uniqueness with sequence, and the Romantic notion of genius with modern objective aesthetics; the general life of forms is interpreted by the “voice” of the individual artist, thanks to a phenomenon of “resonance”. According to Kubler this intuition was one of the strongest points of his teacher’s thought: “the sense of Henri Focillon’s *Vie des formes* captures the illusion of reproductive powers appearing to reside in things, and André Malraux later amplified the perception upon a much larger canvas in *Voices of Silence*” [91]. And we can see now how much the Kublerian dialectics between the artist’s temperament and the tradition was indebted to Focillon’s notion of “spiritual families”, perfectly illustrated in *Vie des formes*, and later developed by his American pupil in the pages dedicated to the different groups of artists.

## 6 - Iconology, Anthropology, Formalism

In the opening pages of his book Kubler challenged the theory of art as a system of symbols [92]. His criticism inevitably also included one who later he acknowledged as a mentor, Erwin Panofsky [93]. In fact, iconology (and not iconography, which was largely employed by Kubler himself) is based on the idea of the continuity of historical time. Above all, iconology can not meet the needs of a history of art which aims to expand its borders and get closer to anthropology, thus including those artefacts, those things, which are produced by non literary cultures [94]. It is noteworthy that Kubler described this contrast metaphorically, as a phenomenon of “colonization”. In his essay *History or Anthropology of art ?* (1975) [95] he in fact proposed an alternative between art history as a humanistic discipline, quite European (Panofsky), and art history as an “American social science” [96]. In this dyad, where is Focillon's place ? I would say that Focillon is at the crossroads, he is one of the historical sources of a new alliance between branches of learning, that can now be considered a possibility, after Hans Belting's and David Freedberg's studies, to name only a few.

Folklore was one of the strongest interests in Focillon's career, and the prime source of George Kubler's dissertation on religious architecture of New Mexico, as he himself confessed [97]. Besides his interest in the popular arts (dating back to the 1928 Prague conference), Focillon also showed a strong sociological approach to art, that is testified by his early collaboration with Henri Berr (for the *Revue de synthèse historique*) [98]. It is important to note that Marc Bloch was among the collaborators to this journal and that in 1939 Focillon was invited by Lucien Febvre to write a paper for his *Encyclopédie Française* [99]; these circumstances may serve to establish a link with the new historical methodology of the *Annales*, and it should also be noted that Focillon collaborated in 1934 with the forefather of the *nouvelle histoire* in France, Henri Pirenne [100]. The art historian also collaborated with Raymond Aron on the work *Les sciences sociales en France*, where he published an essay dedicated to the relationship between art and society; there he explicitly wrote: “the artistic and social event show a common character. They are both extremely formal and the best sociological method is a morphology” [101]. In 1941, two years before his death, Focillon was among the founders (and first President) of the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes in New York, an institution which was from the beginning associated with the New York School for Social Research. Many European scholars from different countries taught in the ELHE [102]. Together with art historians like Jean Seznec,

Charles Sterling, Lionello Venturi, in this "université française militante » operated historians like Gustave Cohen, philosophers like Gilson, Maritain and Koyré, archaeologists like Seyrig, sociologists like Gurvitch, linguists like Jakobson, and – last but not least – the young anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss [103]. At the ELHE art history had a privileged place in a interdisciplinary vision of culture, which concentrated on “visual forms”, to use Kubler’s expression.

In his 1961 review of Panofsky's *Renaissance and Renascences in Western art*, published in *Art News* [104], Kubler reflected on the principle of disjunction, noting that the very first elaboration of this concept went back to Adolf Goldschmidt's *Das Nachleben der antiken Formen im Mittelalter*, published in a 1921 issue of the *Vorträge des Bibliothek Warburg* [105]. But in the 1975 essay cited above (and in other papers) [106] Kubler also noted how the principle of disjunction should be reassigned to *The Life of forms*. In Focillon's view the forms are highly "unstable", their vitality is unpredictable, governed by what he calls the *génie de l'impropriété* [107]. His criticism of the Hegelian theory of the image as a symbol (and of art as a system of symbols) could not be clearer: forms are not strictly tied to a precise meaning, even if this varies in time. However in *The Life of forms* he stated: « Tantôt la forme (...) se présente comme un moule creux, où l'homme verse tour à tour des matières très différentes qui se soumettent à la courbe qui les presse, et qui acquièrent ainsi une signification inattendue (...) Il arrive que la forme se vide complètement, qu'elle survive longtemps à la mort de son contenu et même qu'elle se renouvelle avec une richesse étrange » [108].

Kubler perhaps sensed that the principle of disjunction was the result of a fruitful intellectual exchange between Focillon and Panofsky in the 1930s and 1940s, and that is what I am now inclined to believe [109]. In his theoretical paper entitled *Zum Problem der Beschreibung und Inhaltsdeutung von Werken der bildenden Kunst*, published in the 1932 issue of the journal *Logos*, for the first time Erwin Panofsky analysed the principle of disjunction [110]. It is possible that Focillon and his German colleague had an opportunity to discuss this problem in the summer of 1932, when the French art historian hosted Panofsky in his country home at Maranville. They agreed on the theoretical aspect, that is the non-exact adherence of form and meaning, but not about historiographical conclusions. According to his own humanistic, highly intellectual vision of the history of art, Panofsky intended to emphasize the profound break that occurred in the Middle Ages, and stressed the primacy of the classical tradition [111]. On the contrary, for Focillon the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were

closely related phases, merging into one another; he in fact did not speak of rebirth, but of sleep and awakening [112].

Panofsky's ideas found a wider course in his *Renaissance and renaissances*, a work which dates back to 1944 [113], that is one year after Focillon's death. In a lecture given at Dumbarton Oaks in 1941 [114], dedicated to *Préhistoire et moyen âge*, Focillon stressed the *morphological nature of the disjunction*, as he wrote: "Ces formes, définies avec une puissante netteté et comme frappées dans une matière très dure, traversant le temps sans en être affectées. Ce qui peut changer, c'est la manière dont elles sont lues par les générations, qui versent en elles diverses sortes de contenu, si bien que l'on peut dire, en renversant un vers fameux : la forme demeure et la matière se perd, - la 'matière', c'est-à-dire ce qui emplit la forme, ou ce qui la revêt. En d'autres termes, stabilité morphologique, instabilité sémantique"[115].

Like his French teacher, Kubler himself substituted Panofsky's dyad "Renaissance/renaissances" with his alternative "prime objects/replicas", thereby stressing the importance of the medieval period [116]. Actually Kubler and Focillon considered that the most appropriate notion to enable an analysis of the discontinuity of history was the *form* – and not the image, anchored to a precise, mostly classical, meaning. This was the heritage of Riegl's formalism, which had opened up art history to the world of artefacts and their ornamental language, tracing the history of the energy of things and their chains [117].

As the American stated: "The principle of disjunction, once accepted, brings into question every ethnological analogy by insisting upon discontinuity rather than continuity wherever long durations are under discussion, but it also provides a serviceable explanation for many complex mechanisms of cultural change" [118]. Moreover, Kubler also intended to reconcile the two traditions (or cultures), by melting history and anthropology, by that "humanization" of anthropology which is precisely what he tried to do in *The Shape of Time*, where he stated that "anthropological archaeology could be humanized" [119].

### **Epilogue : the course of the *times***

Kubler's merit was to put art history – which was to become for him a history of things, or "visual forms" – at the very centre of the debate on the study of history itself. If Warburg had promoted the



shift from the word to the image, Kubler had considered the artefact and the work of art as an epistemological tool to unveil the irregularities of historical time. This was openly acknowledged by Siegfried Kracauer, who was convinced that "the problematic character of chronological time" had been earlier and better understood by anthropologists and art historians, rather than by historians or philosophers of history [120].

Siegfried Kracauer came across *The shape of time* in 1962, thanks to a suggestion from Erwin Panofsky [121]. Kracauer not only welcomed the suggestion, but he also responded in an enthusiastic tone, happy to make this discovery. In Kubler's book Kracauer appreciated above all the "merger between the behaviorial science approach and the traditional humanistic outlook (...) and the whole shift of emphasis from schools and styles to the 'fibrous bundles' of formal sequences in which indeterminate time takes on shape may well act as a beneficent stimulant" [122]. Thanks to Panofsky, the German sociologist was therefore captured by the theoretical foundations of *The Life of forms*, which had been taken up and re-elaborated in *The Shape of Time* [123].

A few years later, in his *The Last things before the Last*, Kracauer went back to Focillon's *Vie des formes*, where he found one of the best examples of a new history, in which the traditional notion of *Zeitgeist* was replaced with a plural "course of the *times*": "the period, so to speak, disintegrates before our eyes. From a meaningful spatiotemporal unit, it turns into a kind of meeting place for chance encounters – something like the waiting room of a railway station" [124]. It's worthwhile remembering that in both Focillon's and Kubler's thought chance played a decisive role in the life of forms. Indeed *hasard* is one of the major forces in the realisation of a work of art, in the solution of a problem. Evidently Focillon's dynamical formalism did in fact influence historical and sociological studies.

Critics like Kracauer, Belting [125] and Didi-Huberman [126] have insisted on the crucial moment of foundation of a renewed art history (in *fin de siècle* Germany and Vienna), calling it problematic, systematic, or anachronistic; they all interpreted this phenomenon as a real epistemological *saltus* in the study of history itself, proceeding from words to images (the "iconic turn"), from a regular to an irregular representation of time [127]. Besides Riegl, Warburg, Wölfflin and Focillon, George Kubler should undoubtedly be named in this epochal constellation. Kubler's pushed the epistemological change to its limits, extending the boundaries of art history, from a history of forms to a history (or a

“semantic”) [128] of things and man [129]. From 1962 onwards there was no going back.

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[1] An accurate contextualisation of Focillon's presence in the American world of art history may be found in G. Perini, *La ricezione di Focillon e dei suoi in America*, in *Henri Focillon e l'Italia, Focillon et l'Italie*, Atti del Convegno, Ferrara 16-17 aprile 2004, edd. A. Ducci, A. Thomine, R. Varese, Firenze 2006, pp. 161-179; see also P. Schandel, *L'expérience américaine, 1933-1943*, in *La vie des formes. Henri Focillon et les arts*, exh. cat. (Lyon 2004), edd. Ch. Briend, A. Thomine, Paris-Gand 2004, pp. 167-178. For a direct account see: Ch. Seymour jr., *Henri Focillon and Yale*, in *Mélanges Henri Focillon*, dir. G. Wildenstein, New York 1944 (*Gazette des beaux-arts*, 26, 1944), pp. 7-8.

[2] G. Kubler, *Henri Focillon, 1881-1943*, (1945), in *Studies in ancient American and European art. The collected essays of George Kubler*, ed. Th. F. Reese, New Haven – London, Yale University Press, 1985, pp. 378-380; G. Kubler, *Carroll Meeks*, in *Eye. Yale Art Association, New Haven*, 1, 1967, pp. 6-7; G. Kubler, *History or Anthropology of Art ?*, (1975), in *Studies*, pp. 406-412 (in Italy this essay was soon translated as 'Storia' o 'Antropologia' dell'arte?, in *Prospettiva*, 5, 1976, pp. 6-10, with a comment by G. Previtali, 'Storia' o 'Antropologia' dell'arte?, pp. 3-6; see also G. Previtali, *Nota*, in G. Kubler, *La forma del tempo*, Torino 1976, pp. 157-182); G. Kubler, *Sumner Crosby, I: New Haven*, in *Essays in Honor of Sumner McKnight Crosby* (*Gesta*, XV, 1-2, 1976), pp. 5-6; G. Kubler, *The Teaching of Henri Focillon*, (1981), in *Studies*, pp. 381-385 (in French as *L'enseignement d'Henri Focillon*, in *Relire Focillon*, (Conférences et Colloques du Louvre), ed. M. Waschek, Paris 1998, pp. 12-24.

[3] U. Pfisterer, *George Kubler (1912-1996)*, in *Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte*, ed. U. Pfisterer, 2: *Von Panofsky bis Greenberg*, München 2008, pp. 203-214; Boehm's Introduction to the German edition of *The Shape of Time* (G. Boehm, *Kunst versus Geschichte. Ein unerledigtes Problem. Zur Einleitung in George Kublers 'Die Form der Zeit'*, in G. Kubler, *Die Form der Zeit. Anmerkungen zu einer Geschichte der Dinge*, Frankfurt a.M. 1982, pp. 7-26). See also W.E. Kleinbauer, *Introduction*, in *Modern Perspectives in Western Art History: An Anthology of 20th Century Writings on the Visual Arts*, ed. W.E. Kleinbauer, New York 1971, pp. 30-32; A. Bonet Correa, *In Memoriam George Kubler*, in *Anales de historia del arte*, 6, 1996, p. 9-11; U. Kultermann, *Storia della storia dell'arte*, (1990), Vicenza 1997, pp. 221-222; C. Cieri Via, *Nei dettagli nascosto. Per una storia del pensiero iconologico*, n.e. Roma 2009, pp. 210-215.

[4] Th.F. Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, in *Studies*, pp. XVII-XXXVI, esp. XII-XX, XXIV-XXV; Th. F. Reese, *Introduction to G. Kubler, La configuración del tiempo: Observaciones sobre la historia de las cosas*, Madrid 1988 (English version).

[5] H. Focillon, *Vie des Formes*, Paris, Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1934 ; here in the following edition : *Vie des formes, suivi de Eloge de la main*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1996 (hereafter quoted as : VF).

[6] Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XIX. About the relationship between Victor and Henri Focillon see: H. Focillon, *Victor Focillon. 1849-1918*, in *Annuaire de la Société des Aquafortistes Français*, 1927, pp. 11-24, and the exhibition catalogue: *Victor Focillon, Dijon, 1849-1918 et Henri Focillon, Dijon, 1881-1943*, (Dijon, Palais des États de Bourgogne, 1955), Dijon 1955.

[7] For the metaphor in Focillon's writings see: H. Peyre, *Préface*, in *Bibliographie Henri Focillon*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963, pp. 1-8 and in the same volume L. Grodecki, *Introduction*, pp. 9-16; J. Coli, *Une dialectique amoureuse*, dans *Cahiers pour un temps. Henri Focillon*, Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou, 1986, pp. 190-198; S. Thorel-Cailletau, *Le poète*, in *La vie des formes. Henri*

*Focillon et les arts*, pp. 293-299; R. Recht, *Le croire et le voir. L'art des cathédrales (XIIe-XVe siècle)*, Paris 1999, p. 74: in Focillon «l'analyse du style est un fait de langage. Elle prend corps dans la formulation verbale d'une réalité phénoménologique complexe. Le langage chargé de cette formulation doit être suggestif». Another source of inspiration for Kubler's metaphorical prose may be the German art historian Friedrich Rintelen, admired by the American young student (see Kultermann, *Storia della storia*, p. 221).

[8] R. Wolf, "The shape of time": of stars and rainbows, in *The Art journal*, 68, 2009, 4, pp. 62-70: 70.

[9] G. Kubler, *The Shape of Time. Remarks on the History of Things*, New Haven - London, Yale Univ. Press, 1962 (hereafter quoted as: ST).

[10] Kubler, *Henri Focillon*, p. 378.

[11] Reese's *Editor's Introduction*, esp. p. XXIV.

[12] Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXVI.

[13] Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art*, translated and edited by Ch. Beecher Hogan e George Kubler, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1942 (then, in a fuller version including Focillon's *In Praise of Hands*, 1948).

[14] See the remarks by H. Zerner, *Écrire l'histoire de l'art: figures d'une discipline*, Paris 1997, the last chapter and H. Zerner, *Entre histoire de l'art microscopique et macroscopique*, in *La vie des Formes. Henri Focillon*, pp. 277-281: 277; about Malraux's use of photographs see also: M. F. Zimmermann, *Art History s Anthropology: French and German Traditions*, in *The Art Historian. National traditions and institutional practices*, ed. M.F. Zimmermann, New Haven – London, Yale University Press, 2003, ('Clark studies in the visual arts'), pp. 167-188, esp. p. 178.

[15] VF, p. 1.

[16] ST, p. 35.

[17] H. Focillon, *Ma perspective intérieure*, (1936), in H. Focillon, *Moyen-Age. Survivances et réveils, Etudes d'art et d'histoire*, New York 1943, pp. 7-9.

[18] Reese, *Introduction*.

[19] A. Ducci, «Leur chair chante des Marseillaises». *La main dans les écrits sur l'art en France, repères pour un parcours*, in *Die Hand – Elemente einer Medizin- und Kulturgeschichte*, Internationales Symposium, Greifswald 28 - 30 juni 2007, dir. M. Gadebusch Bondio, Berlin 2010, pp. 239-264.

[20] A. Ducci, *Familles de mains. Sources littéraires et iconographiques dans l'Éloge de la main*, in *Henri Focillon*, Actes du colloque international (Paris, 2004), ed. P. Wat, Paris 2007, pp. 63-70.

[21] About this aspect, see M. Miller, *Shaped Time*, in *Art Journal*, 68, 2009, 4, pp. 71-77, esp. p. 76-77.

[22] ST, p. 8.

[23] ST, p. 11.

[24] VF, pp. 3, 69.

[25] D. Arasse, *Lire Vie des formes*, in *Cahiers pour un temps. Henri Focillon*, pp. 153-169; J. Thuillier, *La Vie des formes: une théorie de l'histoire de l'art?*, in *Relire Focillon*, pp. 77-96, Recht, *Le croire et le voir*, *passim*; R. Recht, *Du style aux catégories optiques*, in *Relire Wölfflin*, (Conférences et Colloques du Louvre), Paris 1995, pp. 33-59; J. Thuillier, *Théorie générale de l'histoire de l'art*, Paris 2003, p. 90 and *passim*; Zerner, *Entre histoire de l'art microscopique*, *passim*.

[26] See especially Reese, *Introduction*.

[27] G. Bazin, *Storia della storia dell'arte. Da Vasari ai nostri giorni*, (1986), Napoli 1993, p. 314; E. Castelnuovo, *Prefazione* a H. Focillon, *Vita delle forme*, Torino 1987, pp. VII-XXXI; M. Courtois, *Dossier*, in E. Faure, *Histoire de l'art. L'esprit des formes*, t. II, Paris 1991, pp. 460-474; D. Jarrassé, *En quête de lois et de rythmes: contribution à une généalogie du formalisme*, in *L'histoire de l'art et le comparatisme: les horizons du détour*, a c. di M. Bayard, Paris 2007, ('Collection d'histoire de l'art de l'Académie de France à Rome', 8), pp. 71-90.

[28] VF, pp. 2, 3.

[29] VF, p. 100.

[30] ST, p. 72.

[31] Kubler, *Style and the Representation of Historical Time*, (first delivered to the New York Academy of Sciences' Conference on Time, 1966), in *Studies*, pp. 386-390, p. 388.

[32] ST, p. 122.

[33] ST, pp. 37, 13.

[34] ST, p. 13.

[35] VF, p. 84.

[36] *L'An mil* was published posthumously by The Henri Focillon Society of America (Paris 1952); here consulted as H. Focillon, *L'an mil*, Paris 1984, p. 9-10.

[37] A. Ducci, *Henri Focillon et l'histoire, réflexions à partir de L'An Mil*, in *Revue de l'art*, 150, 2005, 4, pp. 67-73.

[38] H. Focillon, *Sur la notion de style*, in *Actes du XIII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d'histoire de l'art*, (Stockholm 1933), Stockholm 1933, pp. 300-02.

[39] Through the Vienna School and mostly thanks to Riegl, this idea was passed on to Walter Benjamin and to his idea of "discontinuous" history made of debris.

[40] ST, p. 109.

[41] See the remarkable essay by E.K. Levy, *Classifying Kubler: between the complexity of Science and Art*, in *Art Journal*, 68, 2009, 4, pp. 88-98 (who strengthens the link with Thomas Kuhn's work). From an epistemological point of view see H.J. Rheinberger, *History of Science with George Kubler*, in *Texte zur Kunst*, 19, 76, 2009, pp. 109-111, and his own contribution to the present volume.

[42] ST, p. 16-17.

[43] H. Focillon, *L'art des sculpteurs romans. Recherches sur l'histoire des formes*, (1931), Paris 1988, p. 103; VF, p. 9.

[44] Quoted from the manuscript *Connaissance du Passé (première ébauche, New Haven 25 mars 1936)*, p. 1, 4 (Paris, Archives Focillon, boîte 10; see a reference in C. Tissot, *Archives Henri Focillon (1881-1943). Inventaire*, Paris 1998, p. 67). About this unpublished œuvre see my forthcoming *Grand Canyon. Ancora su Henri Focillon e la storia*, in *Mosaik. Per Gianni Carlo Sciolla*, edd. R. Cioffi, O. Scognamiglio, Napoli 2012.

[45] VF, p. 83.

[46] Kubler, *Style and the Representation of Historical Time*: p. 849, and ST, p. 12.

[47] Kubler, *The Teaching of Henri Focillon*, p. 384.

[48] ST, p. 12.

[49] ST, p. 13.

[50] An analogous idea in Ackerman's concept of style (JS. Ackerman, *A Theory of Style*, in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 2, 1962, pp. 227-237); see on this point G. Kubler, *Towards a Reductive Theory of Visual Style*, (1979), in *Studies*, pp. 418-423.

[51] Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXV and XXVI.

[52] For Kubler and the notion of style – perceived as both too narrow and too broad - see Wolf, *"The Shape of Time"*. From a general point of view see R. Recht, *L'objet de l'histoire de l'art*, Leçon inaugurale du Collège de France faite le jeudi 14 mars 2002, Paris 2003, pp. 32-41 and R. Recht, *La périodisation, l'histoire, le style*, in *La périodisation en histoire de l'art*, Paris 2009, (*Perspective*, 2008, 4), pp. 604-620.

[53] ST, p. 4.

[54] M. Schapiro, *Style*, in *Anthropology today*, ed. A. Kroeber, Chicago 1953, pp. 278-303: "But the style is, above all, a system of forms with a quality and a meaningful expression through which the personality of the artist and the broad outlook of a group are visible. It is also a vehicle of expression within the group, communicating and fixing certain values of religious, social, and moral life through the emotional suggestiveness of forms". On this famous essay see especially J.S. Ackerman, *On Rereading "Style"*, in *On the Work of Meyer Schapiro*, New York, New School for Social Research, 1978 (*Social Research*, 45, 1978, 1), pp. 153-163; M.A. Holly, *Schapiro's Style*, in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 55, 1997, pp. 6-10, A. Wallach, *Meyer Schapiro's Essay on Style: Falling into the Void*, in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 55, 1997, pp. 11-15, P. Mattick, *Form and Theory: Meyer Schapiro's Theory and Philosophy of Art*, in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 55, 1997, pp. 16-18. For Kubler's criticism towards Schapiro see Ackerman's paper cited above in this footnote, and Reese, *Introduction*.

[55] Kubler, *Style and the Representation of Historical Time*, pp. 386, 390.

[56] ST, p. 129.

[57] See the review of *The Shape of Time* by J. Bialostocki, in *Art Bulletin*, 47, 1, 1965, p. 135-139; J. Brodsky, *Continuity and Discontinuity in Style: A Problem in Art historical Methodology*, in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 39, 1, 1980, pp. 27-37, p. 28 stated that in 1962 the world of art history was not ready yet to cancel out the category of style.

[58] Kubler, *Towards a Reductive Theory*.

[59] As noted by Reese, *Introduction*.

[60] VF, p. 11.

[61] VF, p. 23. In that, Focillon's idea of style seems to be closer to that of Schapiro. However, Focillon's hostility towards Schapiro must be recalled (W. Cahn, *Schapiro and Focillon*, in *Gesta*, 41, 2002, 1, pp. 129-136; G. Perini, *Introduzione: Meyer Schapiro: incunaboli di una lettura semiotica dell'arte figurative*, in M. Schapiro, *Per una semiotica del linguaggio visivo*, Roma 2002, pp. 7-77, esp. 16-17, 24-25).

[62] VF, p. 12.

[63] H. Zerner, *A propos of Buffon's Discours du style*, in *Music and the Aesthetics of Modernity: Essays*, ed. by K. Berger, A. Newcomb, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) and London, 2005; G. Bazin, *Le langage des styles*, Paris 1976.

[64] VF, p. 87.

[65] VF, p. 13. For the concept of *simultanéité* in Focillon see Recht, *Le croire et le voir*, p. 72.

[66] L. Courajod, *Leçons professées à l'école du Louvre (1887-1896)*, II: *Origines de la Renaissance*, edd. H. Lemonnier, A. Michel, Paris 1901, *Cours de 1888*, p. 186. See *Un combat pour la sculpture. Louis Courajod (1841 - 1896), historien d'art et conservateur*, Actes de la journée d'étude organisée par l'École du Louvre (Paris 1996), ed. G. Bresc-Bautier, Paris 2003; G. Bresc-Bautier, "La bataille dure encore entre les Pontifes de l'Antiquité et les Paladins du Moyen Age": la querelle de la "première Renaissance" française, in *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIXe siècle*, edd. R. Recht, Ph. Sénéchal, C. Barbillon, F.-R. Martin, Actes du colloque (Paris, Collège de France e INHA, 2004), Paris 2008, pp. 69-93.

[67] Kubler, *Style and the Representation*, p. 389.

[68] H. Bredekamp, *Wilhelm Pinder*, in *In der Mitte Berlins: 200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität*, Proceedings of the Congress (Berlin, 27.-29.11.2008), edd. H. Bredekamp, A.S. Labuda, (Humboldt-Schriften zur Kunst- und Bildgeschichte, 12), Berlin 2010, pp. 295-310.

[69] See what Bazin, *Storia della storia dell'arte*, p. 560 says about Kubler's dislike towards racism.

[70] For Kubler's and Focillon's eventual links with W. Pinder's thought, see Castelnuevo, *Prefazione*, and Previtali, *Nota*, p. 171. Indeed a parallel should be made with Max Dvořák's non-regular ontologies (M. Vaněk, *L'école française et l'école viennoise d'histoire de l'art: Max Dvorák et Henri Focillon; antagonisme au complémentarité?*, in *Akten des 25. Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte (C.I.H.A.)*, edd. H. Fillitz, M. Pippal, I: *Wien und die Entwicklung der kunsthistorischen Methode*, Sektion 1, Wien 1984, pp. 105-115; for a brilliant criticism of Dvořák's œuvre see : M. Rampley, *Max Dvořák: Art History and the Crisis of Modernity*, in *Art History*, 26, 2, 2003, pp. 214-237).

[71] "Le temps est tantôt à ondes courtes et tantôt à ondes longues, et la chronologie sert, non à prouver la constance et l'isochronie des mouvements, mais à mesurer la différence de longueur d'onde (VF, p. 87).

[72] VF, p. 24.

[73] In a letter to the Roumanian art historian Georg Oprescu : "(...) je suis en train de rédiger un traité plus général, où j'entrechoque violemment les doctrines. Il me faut la peau de Wölfflin pour décorer mon cabinet de travail. Il est bien vrai que c'est un tigre royal, et un grand maître. Peut-être ne lui donnerai-je, après tout, que quelques légers coups de griffe, et que c'est moi qui irai, comme trophée, orner sa retraite (...) » (letter dated « le Lundi de Pâques 1931 », and published in *Lettres de Henri Focillon à Georges Oprescu*, in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, série Beaux-Arts, XXIX, 1992, pp. 3-131).

[74] As stated by one of Focillon's closest pupils, J. Bony, *Henri Focillon (1881-1943)*, as the Introduction to the Italian edition of H. Focillon, *L'arte dell'Occidente*, (1938), Torino 1987 (II ed.), pp. XXXIII-XLV, p. XXXVIII.

[75] ST, p. 55-56.

[76] VF, p. 1.

[77] VF, p. 3.

[78] Kubler, *The teaching of Henri Focillon*, p. 381.

[79] ST, p. vii.

[80] « Comme l'espace de la vie, l'espace de l'art n'est pas sa propre figure schématique, son abréviation justement calculée. Bien que ce soit une illusion assez communément répandue, l'art n'est pas seulement une géométrie fantastique, ou plutôt une topologie plus complexe, il est lié au poids, à

la densité, à la lumière, à la couleur » (VF, p. 50).

[81] ST, p. 83.

[82] ST, p. 36.

[83] ST, p. viii. On this point see Levy, *Classifying Kubler*, p. 93.

[84] Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXIV.

[85] See notably Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXX-XXXI and Rheinberger, *History of Science*.

[86] G. Kubler, *Comment*, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 11, 4, 1969, pp. 398-402.

[87] VF, p. 59.

[88] ST, p. 18.

[89] H. Focillon, *Généalogie de l'unique*, in *Actes du II<sup>e</sup> Congrès d'Esthétique et de Science de l'Art*, (Paris 1937), Paris 1937, vol. II, pp. 120-127 : 121

[90] Focillon, *Généalogie*, p. 123.

[91] ST, p. 62. See also Kubler, *The Teaching of Henri Focillon*, p. 382.

[92] On this point see the remarks by D. Preziosi in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, Oxford – New York 1998, pp. 66-69.

[93] Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXXIII, outlined two distinct phases in Kubler's thought, the first (1940s and 1950s) focusing on the idea of history and culture, as influenced by Focillon and Kroeber, the second (1960s and 1970s) largely inspired by Panofsky's principle of disjunction.

[94] Moreover, the symbols of Panofskyan iconology (which Kubler calls "adherent signals") can not function with contemporary art, which is based on an abstract language; in this case it would be more appropriate to speak of "self-signal (...) the mute existential declaration of things" (ST, p. 24), and replace "meaning" with "being" (see G. Kubler, *Disjunction and mutational energy*, review of E. Panofsky's *Renaissance and Renascences in Western art*, in *Art News*, 59, 1961, 10, p. 34, 55).

[95] G. Kubler, *History or Anthropology of art ?*.

[96] For the story of the discipline in the USA in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century see J.S. Ackerman, R. Carpenter, *Art and Archaeology*, Englewood Cliffs (NJ) 1963.

[97] "My own choice of a doctoral dissertation in 1934 on the religious architecture of New Mexico had its origin in Focillon's concern with survivals and reawakenings in folk art" (Kubler, *The Teaching of Henri Focillon*, p. 383).

[98] For these aspects in Focillon see A. Ducci, *Henri Focillon, l'arte popolare e le scienze sociali*, in "Annali di critica d'arte", II, 2006, pp. 341-389.

[99] Henri Focillon, *La culture esthétique*, in *Encyclopédie française*, XV, *Éducation et instruction*, Paris 1939, pp. 15'36'9-15'38'2.

[100] H. Focillon, *Les mouvements artistiques*, in *La Civilisation occidentale au Moyen-Age du XI<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, edd. H. Pirenne, G. Cohen, H. Focillon, Paris 1934, pp. 417-663. Kubler's broad idea of art history has been compared to Marc Bloch's and Fernand Braudel's new history by Reese, *Editor's Introduction*, p. XXXII.

[101] H. Focillon, *Histoire de l'art*, in *Les Sciences sociales en France. Enseignement et recherche*, edd. R. Aron, A. Demangeon, H. Focillon, Paris s.d. [1937], pp. 163-183.

[102] H. Focillon, *L'École Libre des Hautes Études de New York*, in *Témoignage pour la France*, New York 1945 (speech for the inaugural session of the ELHE, 18 march 1942). See F. Chaubet, E. Loyer, *L'École Libre des Hautes Études: exil et résistance intellectuelle (1942-1946)*, in *Revue historique*, 4, 2000, p. 939-972.

[103] See Thomas Crow's account in his *The Intelligence of Art*, Chapel Hill and London 1999, chapter 2, esp. pp. 25-27.

[104] Kubler, *Disjunction*. See Ch. S. Wood, *Art history's normative Renaissance*, in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. A. J. Grieco, M. Rocke, F. Gioffredi Superbi, Florence 2002, ('Villa i Tatti', 19), p. 65-92.

[105] In actual fact Kubler dated the 1921 article as published in 1936. However, the concept of disjunction was much older, since – as Gombrich writes in his intellectual biography of Warburg – it dated back to Anton Springer's *Bilder aus der Neueren Kunstgeschichte* (1867), which introduced the notion of *Nachleben* for the first time.

[106] G. Kubler, *Renaissance and Disjunction in the Art of Mesoamerican Antiquity*, (1977), in *Studies*, pp. 351-360; G. Kubler, *The Shape of Time Reconsidered*, (1981), in *Studies*, pp. 424-430, p. 429.

[107] VF, p. 8.

[108] VF, p. 6.

[109] See my *Altri atlanti di immagini: Henri Focillon e la vitalità delle forme*, in *Aby Warburg antropologo dell'immagine*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Genova, 2005), ed. E. Villari, in press.

[110] See the remarks by M. Ghelardi, *La violence de l'interprète*, in *Relire Panofsky*, (Conférences et colloques du Louvre), ed. M. Waschek, Paris 2008, p. 89-104.

[111] Besides M.A. Holly, *Panofsky and the foundations of art history*, Ithaca/N.Y. 1984, see C. Landauer, *Erwin Panofsky and the renaissance of the Renaissance*, in *Renaissance quarterly*, 47, 1994, pp. 255-281; M. Fumaroli, *A Student of Rhetoric in the Field of Art History: from Curtius to Panofsky*, in *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Views from the Outside. A Centennial Commemoration of Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968)*, Princeton 1995pp. 169-174; G. Didi-Huberman, *L'exorciste*, in *Relire Panofsky*, pp. 67-87;

[112] A. Ducci, *Risvegli e prodigi. Il gotico secondo Jurgis Baltrušaitis*, in "Notizie da Palazzo Albani", XXXIII, 2004, pp. 215-231.

[113] E. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, in *Kenyon Review*, 6, 1944, pp. 201-236; later partially included in *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, Stockholm 1960.

[114] E. Burnet Clark, *Henri Focillon at Dumbarton Oaks: a few memories*, in *Mélanges Henri Focillon*, p. 27-30.

[115] H. Focillon, *Préhistoire et Moyen Age*, (1941), in H. Focillon, *Moyen-Age. Survivances et réveils*, pp. 13-30 : p. 15.

[116] This salient point is discussed by Wolf, *The Shape of time*, p. 65-66: "Kubler wants to offer (...) a reversal of Panofsky's methodology".

[117] Kubler opposed rigid formalism: "Yet the same sorts of schematic deformation limit both iconographers and morphologists. If the former reduces things to skeletal meanings, the latter submerges them in streams of abstracts terms and conceptions which mean less and less the more they are used" (ST, p. 128). For Kubler's 'formalism' see Ch. S. Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction: Temporalities of German Renaissance Art*, Chicago 2008, p. 37.



[118] Kubler, *Renascence and Disjunction*, p. 353; see also G. Kubler, *Period, Style and Meaning in Ancient American Art*, (1970), in *Studies*, pp. 395-405.

[119] *A Talk with George Kubler. An Interview by Robert Joseph Horvitz*, (1973), in *Studies*, pp. 413-417, p. 416.

[120] Cfr. S. Kracauer, *History – The last Things before the Last*, (1969), Completed by Paul Oskar Kristeller, Princeton 1995, p. 143; the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter ('The Structure of the Historical Universe') dates from 1963-1966, short after the publication of *The Shape of Time*. See Michael Diers, *Bande à part: die Außenseite(r) der Kunstgeschichte. Georg Simmel, Carl Einstein, Siegfried Kracauer, Max Raphael, Walter Benjamin und Rudolf Arnheim*, in *In der Mitte Berlins*, pp. 273-292.

[121] Panofsky's letter to Kracauer, 7 march 1962, published in *Siegfried Kracauer-Erwin Panofsky Briefwechsel 1941-1966*, ed. V. Breidecker, Berlin 1996, p. 67, nr. 61: "There has just appeared a book (perhaps not quite fair in all respects but highly intelligent and, above all, short) which you should certainly read because it deals, among others, with the problems of periodization, historicity, etc., from an entirely fresh point of view; the author is both a brilliant art historian and a well-trained anthropologist". About Panofsky's criticism of Kubler's book, refer to the remarks by D. Wuttke, *L'"Hercule à la croisée des chemins" d'Erwin Panofsky: l'ouvrage et son importance pour l'histoire des sciences de l'art*, in *Relire Panofsky*, pp. 105-147, p. 110 and footnote nr. 13.

[122] Kracauer's letter to Panofsky, 31 march 1962 (*Siegfried Kracauer-Erwin Panofsky Briefwechsel*, p. 68, nr. 62).

[123] See the remarks by Kubler himself, in his *The Shape of Time Reconsidered*, p. 429.

[124] Kracauer, *History*, p. 150.

[125] H. Belting, *The end of the history of Art?*, (1983), Chicago 1987.

[126] G. Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps: histoire de l'art et anachronisme des images*, Paris 2000, p. 25

[127] Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps*, and G. Didi-Huberman, *History and image: has the "epistemological transformation" taken place?*, in *The Art Historian*, pp. 128-143. On this point see also Boehm's remarks in *Kunst versus Geschichte*.

[128] Rheinberger, *History of science*, p. 110.

[129] A. Neumeyer, *Art History: Victory without Trumpet. An Essay on Art History in Our Time*, in *Gesammelte Schriften, Collectanea Artis Historiae*, München 1977, p. 56. See also Kubler's later studies, at the light of the new media, esp.: *A Talk with George Kubler*, and *The Shape of Time Reconsidered*.

## 04. Archival research and qualitative analysis in art history: a case study

by Chara Kolokytha

“The *trouble de l’archive* stems from a *mal d’archive*. We are *en mal d’archive*: in need of archives [...] to be *en mal d’archive* can mean something else than to suffer from a sickness, from a trouble or what the noun “mal” might name [...] It is never to rest, interminably, from searching for the archive right where it slips away. It is to run after the archive, even if there’s too much of it, where something in it anarchives itself. It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, an irrepressible desire to return to the origin, a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return of the most archaic place of absolute commencement.” [1]

Jacques Derrida

As radical as Derrida’s overall approach to the ‘archive’ might seem, seeking for the ‘archive’ not only leads to the *Arkhe*, to the *commencement* in Derrida’s own words, but to the transvaluation of the already existing data that would seemingly suffice to provide us with certain answers to the research questions that actually motivated each study. Speaking, on the other hand, of commencement in different terms it is evident that rarely does an archive initiate a research project; once a specific topic is found, archival research serves to support and extend the initial designations; in these terms, archival research does not actually serve to the commencement but to the fulfillment of the already defined research objectives. Dealing consequently with a strictly defined - and still immense in terms of the pluralism of the methodological approaches that could be potentially attributed to this discipline - art historical project, we were involved in the archival research in order to serve historiography’s proper purposes mostly dealing with objectivity, trying somehow ‘to break up and dissolve a part of the past’ [2] as Nietzsche set it, by keeping in mind that even if we are actually studying a single history, inevitably several other histories are simultaneously developing.

The truth with archival research is that it is empirical. This means that there are no canons or particular methods. Despite the various published guides that address a methodology for archival research, the truth is that each performance of archival research depends on the specific objectives of the researcher and forms a methodology of its own. Though, it is appropriate to proceed to the definition of the ‘archive.’ According to Derrida’s deconstructive analysis of the notion of archiving, the word ‘archive,’ derived from the word *arkhē*, represents two different principles: a. the natural, historical, ontological principle of the commencement, and b. the nomological principle of the commandment. The first is easy to understand. It describes the existence of the archive naturally and historically. The second principle is more complicated. It marks the institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the non secret. It refers to the property or access rights, publication or reproduction rights, classification and putting into order. [3]

Through the study of the history of the twentieth century French review of art and literature, *Verve* (1937-1960), certain spatio-temporal boundaries were to be fixed so as the research to be valid, cohesive and constitutive

towards our research objectives. By means of a short outline to these objectives it is appropriate to underline the multidimensional character (history, culture, art) of an enterprise in the form of an artistic review, its diversity as regards the content (art, literature, poetry) or the support personnel (technicians, writers, artists, poets, editor etc.) its position as well in the material and immaterial culture of France of the twentieth century, and its value in economic and symbolic terms over the course of twenty three years of circulation. Despite the seemingly demarcated outline, the pluralism of factors and contributors could lead to overambitious expectations regarding the diversity and affluence of the sources that were about to be traced and examined; consequently our research perspectives necessitated a much more unambiguous focalization. Provided that we seek to examine a publication, a certain focus on its editor would disembarass our research from practical and theoretical pitfalls that would otherwise emerge. None the less, this much more certain focalization on *Verve*'s editor, Tériade, appears to be equally complicated since the necessity to expound our research material in relation with Tériade's biographical data unavoidably emerged. Finally, as regards the archival material that was incorporated to our study, Tériade was a key figure towards the fulfillment of our prospective analysis.

### **Locating the archives**

By means of the strict limitations that were in logical terms imposed to this project, Tériade became the focus of this research. Tracing archival material related to a single person was by all means effective, while it led us to locate more than 16 institutions and private collections that preserved scattering parts of his personal and professional archives, linking his activity with no less than a hundred outstanding personalities closely associated with our field of study. The abundance of the traced material forced us to define our priorities as to which collection appeared to be of greatest importance to our research interests; though not being able to define *a priori* the quality of the traced material, it was evident that our measures would be strongly quantitative. Despite the fact that we were finally able to visit most of the collections that we initially traced through our research, we are disposed to present and contextualize for the purposes of the present paper an institutional archive that was donated in 2007 to the Musée Matisse, in Cateau Cambrésis (France) by Tériade's wife, Alice Tériade. This institutional passage was accompanied by an exhibition that presented the artworks that were donated to the Museum and it was considered as the most important donation in the history of the Museums of Northern France that upgraded the French province. Consequently, a part of Tériade's archive included artworks and his publications and a second part included documents. Tériade had not organized his archive. He kept all these documents as evidence of his transactions as an editor or as souvenirs from his friends and co-operators. This might well be a reference to the way that he conceived his own activity in the broader historical context. Before the donation, his archive was put into order by his wife and daughter following a simple classification that was to make a distinction between his personal and professional papers. My approach to the archive was different since it was appropriate to contextualize these documents for the purposes of this research.

### **Working through the Archives - Contextualization**

Given that this project is focused on the review *Verve*, Tériade's professional archives could not but monopolize

our interest throughout this research. Despite the fact that the forenamed institution's classification was in general terms randomly organized, preserving the classification of the documents organized by Tériade's daughter (papiers privés, papiers professionnels, papiers du travail etc), we will attempt to present here the archival information in certain categories so as to evaluate its actual role to the development of this research.

## **1. Contracts**

What is important to understand about Tériade's archive is that it also includes the archive of the so-called Maison d'éditions Verve, where the review *Verve* was being published. The contracts traced in this archive could be divided in two certain subcategories:

### **i. Artists' contracts**

Artists' contracts manifest the agreements between the artist and the editor. In the case of Tériade, they could be divided in the contracts that were signed for the purposes of *Verve*'s publication and those that dealt with the publication of the so-called *livres d'artistes*. The contract is an official document; it provides us with certain information about the artworks that were to be published, the quality of the impression, the artist's remuneration, the obligations of the artist and the editor respectively towards each publication. The artists' contracts additionally permit us to estimate the value of the artistic production in economic and symbolic terms as well as the objectives of the publication. The information that could be derived from a contract is often to be enhanced by the information found in the editor's correspondence. The research value that is to be derived consequently from the artists' contracts could be evaluated in terms of the information that defines the standard procedures of production. This is also the case with the contracts that address the printing procedures.

### **ii. Technicians' contracts**

This category leads us to the definition of the support personnel. We are able to identify through certain documents the persons or the institutions that undertook the work related with the production of the review in technical terms. This category also permits us to evaluate the economic and symbolic capital that is to be ascribed to the review, and consequently to reconstruct the history of its production. The company Draeger Frères in brief appeared to be in charge of the printing process (texts, reproductions in colours) and the company Mourlot Frères undertook the lithographic reproduction of the original artworks that were to enrich the content of every issue of *Verve*. The cost of the technical procedures, as indicated by the contracts, not only defines *Verve*'s price and luxurious bearing but demarcates as well its position in the contemporary art market. As was the case with the artists' contracts, there is some supporting information to these documents that is to be found in the rest of the editor's correspondence. What seemed to be of great importance to our research was the exchanged correspondence during the wartime period, since *Verve* was one of the very few magazines that was published and circulated regularly during the Occupation. We were thus able to identify numerous letters on behalf of the

Draeger Frères Company that described thoroughly the difficulties that this editorial house met during these crucial years, allowing us to redefine the history of these wartime issues and the conditions that affected the periodicity of this publication. Further information about these matters would certainly be derived from the rest of the correspondence.

## 2. Correspondence

Tériade's correspondence brought to light the network of his personal and professional relationships that proved both of equal importance. In most cases it was rather difficult to identify the limits between the personal and the professional because of the personal affiliations that he preserved with most of his co-operators. Such examples include the poet Pierre Reverdy, the painter Pierre Bonnard, Tériade's friend and secretary Angèle Lamotte etc. The case of Lamotte is perhaps the most outstanding among the archives since she apparently incarnates a person with no significant historical importance within the field of our study; none the less she appears to be a key figure in the publication of *Verve*, a fact that was to become evident through the archival research. Lamotte seems to be the person who arranged Tériade's affairs with his American financiers, the Esquire – Coronet Incorporation, during the late thirties; she approached the writers that would contribute to the content of *Verve*; she was in charge of organizing every issue's outline; she designed the publicity; she arranged the technical issues etc. A great part of Tériade's correspondence is thus addressed to Lamotte and in fact if her presence was to be neglected, a great part of the history of *Verve* would have remained obscure given that Tériade's papers only manifest the early agreements with the American financiers as regards the publication of *Verve*, while there's no other official document that indicates the end of their collaboration than Lamotte's letters, bringing out vividly the course and the outcome of this affair and providing us with useful information dealing with *Verve*'s sales and critical fortune in the U.S.

Archival research was moreover the only way to achieve the decryption of *Verve*'s existence, being able to unfold the circumstances that favored its creation in 1937. As regards the American involvement by terms of financing this review, little evidence was to be derived from any previous study on the subject mostly by reason of the negative impact that this sort of information would have either on the symbolic value that was ascribed to this enterprise during the late sixties, or on Tériade's own reputation that prospered during the same period when Anti-Americanism was about to reach its apex. No matter how limited the material on this subject appeared to be, we were able through no more than three or four documents to spotlight important evidence that was able to provide our study with some in-depth considerations. In this particular context the signed contract that *sealed* Tériade's co-operation with these editors from overseas was of slight importance. On the contrary, it was Tériade's notes on *Verve*, a few draft pieces of correspondence, as well as the American editors' strictly defined instructions addressed to Tériade that contextualized our research.

Further research associated with Tériade's correspondence permitted us to draw conclusions on his own personality that inevitably reflects *Verve*'s substance. Focusing on the *correspondance reçue* folders we were able to trace a great amount of letters addressed to Tériade, indicating his affiliations with some of the most important French institutions of his time (College de France, Académie Française etc) leading us to certain considerations

regarding the objectives of this publication as well as the role that it preserved within the circles of the French *intelligentsia*. Regarding Tériade's political affiliations, on the other hand, it was hard to ignore the letters on behalf of the Marshal Philippe Pétain of the Vichy Government that were traced in his archive and actually challenged our research perspectives. This sort of material was definitely capable of raising the issue of bias in our research since it proved crucial to decide how these documents were to be presented in our project. This sort of evidence consequently depended on our appreciation as to whether Tériade would be presented as a "collaborator," a fact that would certainly affect his biography and our overall appreciation as well, or *Verve*, as an enterprise of nationalistic guise during a period of national surveillance; a reflection that in fact impresses the spirit of this whole period. One would also refer to the letters from Vincent Auriol, the Minister of State in de Gaulle's provisional government (1946) and first President of the Fourth Republic (1947-1954), as well as to the photographic material that eloquently illustrates his relationship with Tériade.

Through a large amount of documents we were additionally able to trace writers' letters (Jean Paulhan, Marcel Jouhandeau, Henri Michaux, Ernest Hemingway etc) and various versions of the texts that were published in *Verve* as well as texts that were never published, as those of Charles Estienne, Joé Bousquet and Valéry Larbaud that also belong to the history of this publication. A few letters addressed to the editorial house by readers of the review permitted us to shape slightly certain reflections regarding the critical and commercial acceptance of this enterprise by the contemporary audience. Additionally, a great part of the archival material was about to generate certain thoughts on the way that this publication house functioned in practical and economical terms or the conditions of artistic production during the same period, the artists' interference on the publication or the writers' compliance towards the editor's preferences. Consequently these were the factors that cumulatively contributed to our understanding towards the role and function of this specific network that is placed in the centre of our analysis. Further evidence on Tériade's former activities, with a certain focus on his occupation with art criticism, additionally helped us to draw certain conclusions concerning not only his own biography but also the formation and evolution of his aesthetics that would be otherwise undecipherable through a monolithic approach to *Verve*.

As far as the present paper is concerned, we may conclude that archival research not only proved in time to be recursive but also cumulative since it became evident that it was necessary to examine the archival material in its entirety in order to proceed to certain appreciations. Overlooking certain information could be misleading towards the outcome of our research and this is also the case with any untraceable material that was unavoidably set aside from our research schedule. By virtue of these observations it is appropriate to acknowledge that what is equally important to understand about the present paper is that no matter how audacious this effort was to synopsise this kind of material within a few pages, it is more than evident that our attempt to present here only a part of the research material that is associated with our project is also likely to lead to certain misconceptions regarding mostly the diversity of the corpus of the examined sources.

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\* The research, on the archive Teriade at the Musée Matisse in Cateau Cambrésis, was

financed by the Fondation Marc de Montalembert and the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA) in Paris since January 2010. The results of this research were presented in a Conference held at the INHA on December 2010.

[1] Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, 'Archive fever: a Freudian impression,' *Diacritics*, Vol.25, n.2 (Summer, 1995), p.57.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely meditations*, trans Hollingdale, R.J. Cambridge University Press, London, 1982, p.75.

[3] Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, 'Archive fever: a Freudian impression.'

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## 05. Books received

Reviews are welcome from the books below.  
(Alphabetically listing)

- **Christiansen, Keith and Weppelmann, Stefan** (ed.) (2011), *The Renaissance Portrait: From Donatello to Bellini, (Exhibition, Bode Museum, Berlin, 25/8 – 20/11/11, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 21/12/11 – 18/3/12)*, New Heaven and London: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, distributed by Yale University Press. (ISBN 978-0-300-17591-2)
- **Duffy, Eamon** (2011), *Ten Popes Who Shook the World*, New Heaven and London: Yale University Press. (ISBN 978-0-300-17688-9)
- **Hal, Foster** (2012), *The first Pop age: painting and subjectivity in the art of Hamilton, Lichtenstein, Warhol, Richter and Ruscha*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. (ISBN 978-0-691-15138-0)
- **Kemp, Martin** (2004), *Leonardo* (2011), Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-958335-5)
- **Kemp, Martin** (2011), *Christ to Coke: How Image becomes Icon*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-958111-5)
- **Pelikan, Jaroslav** (1990) *Imago Dei: The Byzantine Apologia for Icons*, Judith Herrin (intr.) (2011), Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. (ISBN 978-0-691-14125-1)
- **Ribeiro, Aileen** (2011), *Facing Beauty: Painted Women and Cosmetic Art*, New Heaven and London: Yale University Press. (ISBN 978-0-300-12486-6)
- **Syson, Luke** (2011), *Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan (Exhibition Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan at the National Gallery, London, 9/11/11–5/2/12)*, London: National Gallery Company, distributed by Yale University Press. (ISBN 978-1-85709-491-6)



## **06. Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude**

### **Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude**

14 March – 5 June 2012

Sainsbury Wing

Admission Charge

Turner admired Claude most of all the Old Masters and enthused about the quality of light in the artist's Italian landscapes. On his death, Turner left the National Gallery 'Dido building Carthage' and 'Sun rising through Vapour: Fishermen cleaning and selling Fish' in his will on condition that they were hung between two pictures by Claude, which he named as 'The Seaport' ('Seaport with the Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba') and 'The Mill' ('Landscape with the Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca'). This exhibition brings together other closely related works by both artists, many of which share the same theme, giving visitors a chance to appreciate fully the enormous influence Claude's mastery of light and landscape had on Turner from his formative years until the end of his life.

'Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude' is the most in-depth examination to date of Turner's experience of Claude's art and includes oils, watercolours and sketchbooks. It also introduces visitors to the story of the Turner Bequest and its importance in the history of the National Gallery, with the final room of the show exhibiting archive material dedicated to this relationship.

'Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude' is a National Gallery exhibition created in collaboration with Tate Britain.

**Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude (14 March – 5 June 2012 at the National Gallery)**

Updated on Apr 22, 2012 by [ArtHS Editor](#) (Version 5)

## **07. Next issue; CFP: History of conservation**

**This** is the open call for papers for the next *Art History Supplement (AHS)*. The proposed general theme, but not limited to, is "History of conservation" **Submission** deadline 20 February 2012.

**Aspects** of conservation in theory and in practice. Conservation of material and immaterial, conservation of tangible and intangible culture, of paintings and buildings, natural places and sites. Conservation of personal, public and oral, or not, histories, or else when conservation becomes commemoration.

**AHS** publishes material, dealing with all time periods, methodologies, media, techniques and debates within the field of art history. **Contributions** from any other science (social or not) corresponding to material culture are also welcome.